

THE WAR.

Important News from the National Capital.

Letter of Mr. Seward Defining the Law of Treason.

Rumors in Regard to the Action of England and France.

Military Movements at the Seat of War.

THE BLOCKADE.

Capture of the Yacht Wanderer and Several Other Vessels.

Entrance of the British Ship A and A into Charleston Harbor.

IMPORTANT FROM MISSOURI.

Arrest of More Secessionists by the Union Men.

IMPORTANT LETTER FROM MR. SEWARD ON TREASON.

The following important letter was yesterday written by the Secretary of State:

To G. HENNING, Esq., Agent New York and Virginia Steamship Company, Washington.

Colonel McDowell, Assistant Adjutant General, has been promoted to the position of a Brigadier General.

The Virginia newspapers received to-day news continued arrivals of Confederate troops, and their departure from points not designated.

The Eighth Massachusetts regiment, at the Relay House, have elected Henshaw, in place of Moore, resigned.

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HOW THE GOVERNMENT WILL COLLECT THE REVENUE.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1861.
It appears that the government is steadily carrying out the programme of action as to the rebel States. It has determined to appoint collectors for the different Southern ports, and is engaged in selecting men of energy—whose names we at present withhold—who are adapted to fulfil the important functions confided to them.

ARREST OF A SUSPECTED SPY.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1861.
A man by the name of Wood, from Newark, was arrested as a spy yesterday by order of General Scott. Wood commenced his operations by tampering with the members of the Newark regiment, through which means he obtained an introduction to General Runyon, and thence to General Scott, who became fascinated with his plausible story, and employed him as a secret agent of the government to go South. Wood received some money from the secret service fund to pay his expenses. Before leaving the city he expended a portion of his funds in liquor, and while under the gay and festive influence of the same he pitched into several members of one of the Newark companies for taking up arms against the South. This three suspicion upon him, and he was immediately reported to General Runyon, who was astounded, but immediately ordered him under arrest, and that his person and property in his room be searched. This was done last night, but nothing was found upon him but money. The Colonel of the Newark regiment ordered that a guard be kept over him all night, supposing that the report this morning would release him; but before General Scott read it he ordered Wood to be delivered over to the Marshal of the district and lodged in jail to await further orders. The supposition is that General Scott is in possession of other evidence than that alluded to, upon which the prisoner is held.

INTERESTING ITEMS OF NEWS FROM WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1861.
Ex-Senator Cooper, of Frederick, Maryland, reports that he will have a regiment ready to be mustered into service on Monday next.

The First Michigan regiment, Colonel Wilcox, was reviewed by the President this afternoon. This regiment is accompanied by a fine band of music, is offered by able graduates of the government, and made a splendid appearance as it marched down Pennsylvania avenue.

The Fifth Massachusetts regiment is practicing the severest kind of drill daily. Lieutenant Colonel Green, who was at the Crimea during the war, and is one of the best drill officers in the country, and Lieutenant Dreiser, detailed from West Point, are devoting themselves assiduously to the work of making this one of the best regiments in the service.

The Messrs. Willard, of the hotel, and Simon Draper and Surveyor Wakeman, of New York, have made a donation of five hundred dollars to Colonel Elsworth's regiment, as an acknowledgment of their services at the late fair.

It is known that interviews are being held daily between traitors in Virginia and in this city. This afternoon a well known resident of Washington, who suddenly left the city a few days since and as suddenly returned, took a private carriage and proceeded across the long bridge and met the notorious A. D. Banks, of Virginia, hold an interview with him and returned. The person thus visiting Banks undoubtedly posted him up in regard to the forces now in this city and the intentions of the government, so far as he knew them. He is in the daily habit of visiting the departments here, and there are traitors enough left in town to watch the movements of the government, and pass up the spy report to him. He professes to be a loyalist, but is known to be a secessionist. If he is caught once he will have to answer for all his known treason in the past.

Several of the crew of the Pawnee captured an unloaded schooner lying off Alexandria, it is said, at the instance of some parties in Pennsylvania.

It is evident from appearances that the government intends dealing with Missouri in the same manner it has with Maryland. As an evidence of this the government has concluded to take charge of the Hamilton and St. Joseph Railroad, and employ it for government purposes.

Ex-Governor A. H. Reeder, of Pennsylvania, has been appointed Brigadier General in the regular army.

The Irish brigade, over 1,000 strong, tendered by Major Molligan, was to-day accepted, by Secretary Cameron, for service during the war. Its probable destination is Washington.

The departments daily receive bushels of letters from applicants for places, military and civil, most of which ask for replies. It is proper, therefore, to state that it is the inflexible rule that letters relating to such subjects, though read and filed, are not and cannot be answered.

MILITARY AFFAIRS IN WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1861.
General Butler had an interview to-day with the Secretary of War and General Scott. It is not yet determined what command General Butler will assume. General Cadwallader is ordered to the command of the Department of Annapolis.

General Butler is not promoted to a Major General in the army, but a Major General of volunteers, which expires with the war. It is doubtful whether he accepts. General Butler is a live, progressive man, and will not submit to have the men under his command sacrificed by the old fossil slow coach-red-tape programme attempted to be perpetrated upon the army and the country at the present time.

The report here to-day that General Cadwallader's first official act was to release Rose Wiggins, creates an intense feeling of indignation. There are reports that Cadwallader is a large property holder in Baltimore, and desires to pacify the rebels of the city.

The President summoned the Cabinet to-day in great haste, and they were in session about one hour. Secretary Seward left the White House at the close of the meeting, and proceeded to the quarters of General Butler, and not finding the latter in, despatched one of the General's aids in pursuit of him. The interview was soon had, and lasted some time.

STOPPAGE OF EXPRESS MATTER.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1861.
Brigadier General Mansfield to-day issued an order as follows:

I ordered by telegraph the agent of Adams' Express Company at New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore that in the future no express matter, inclusive of letters, will be permitted to go south of this city to Virginia. Last evening Colonel Stone seized by my order the express matter, and stopped all contraband goods, and allowed the rest to go forward.

Ex-Governor A. H. Reeder, of Pennsylvania, well known in connection with the early history of Kansas, was to-day appointed Brigadier General by the President.

The opening of the line of travel from Baltimore north and northwest has been the signal for a rush of travel for Washington. Yesterday and to-day's trains brought hundreds of passengers.

PROMOTIONS IN THE GENERAL STAFF AND MEDICAL DEPARTMENTS.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1861.
A general army order has been issued, stating that there will be added to the general staff of the army four quartermasters and eight assistants, to be promoted and selected according to existing laws and regulations.

There will be added to the Medical Department ten surgeons and twenty assistants. The surgeons will be promoted from the senior assistant surgeons, and the assistants appointed from civil life, after having passed the usual examination by the Board from the Medical Department of the army. The public notice of the appointment and time and place of meeting of the Board will be given.

THE RELEASE OF WINANS.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1861.
The statement that Rose Wiggins, of Baltimore, was unconditionally released, is unfounded. There is authority for stating that he was only released by order of the government on his giving a parole of honor that he would do no act, openly or covertly, hostile to the government of the United States.

THE PROPOSED STATE OF NEW VIRGINIA.



The proposed State of New Virginia, as indicated in the above engraving, comprehends a superficial area equal to that of Maryland and Delaware together, and includes thirty-three counties. Their aggregate population is 270,000 whites and 6,000 slaves, which indicates that the main body of the new Commonwealth would be that of a free State. If carried into operation, the new State will not lack the elements of interest and prosperity. It is a splendid grain growing region; it abounds in extensive forests of gigantic trees of valuable timber; it embraces the rich Kanawha canal fields, coal and salt works; it is stored with iron and other minerals; its water powers, for driving mills of all kinds, are unlimited; it is crossed by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad; it includes the commercial and manufacturing city of Wheeling, and is bounded for two hundred miles by the Potomac River. It is, in a word, a fertile region of mountains, covered with great forests, table lands, hills and valleys and sparkling rivers, capable of sustaining a population of several millions, and one of the healthiest regions in the world. As the ball, too, has been put in motion, we predict that it will not stop until New Virginia is a fixed fact, and a new center of emigration, enterprise and development anchoring to Old Virginia.

NEWS FROM MARYLAND AND VIRGINIA—MORE BATTERIES AT HARPER'S FERRY.

BALTIMORE, May 17, 1861.
No more troops have arrived here to-day. The encampment at Locust Point has been visited by thousands of citizens, all of whom are pleased with the quiet and orderly conduct of the troops.

The people fraternize with the soldiers, and bring them little presents of fruit, beer and cakes. Very few soldiers are seen about the city; they are kept strictly within the lines. A gentleman sent to General Cadwallader a present of some superb pheasants, each one weighing nearly twenty pounds. The whole force, General officers and men—appear to be the pets of the people. More troops are expected to arrive to-night from Perryville and Harpersburg.

Rose Wiggins has been released, but conditionally. He has given his parole of honor that he will not either openly or covertly do any act against the government of the United States, and on the strength of this promise he is at large.

I have just returned from the Relay House. All right there. The Eighth (New York) regiment are to go to Washington to-night. It was known in the camp that several other regiments had been ordered to Washington, and would be there to-morrow.

The Lynchburg Virginian of to-day says that the remains of Washington have been conveyed to Lexington, Va., and there interred in a suitable mausoleum.

The train from the West on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad came in as usual this afternoon. There is no truth in the report that bridges had been destroyed.

We have direct news from Harper's Ferry by the arrival. New batteries have been erected on the hills since Wednesday, and mounted with cannon. It was supposed by the rebel chiefs that they would be attacked soon after the close of the week, and that Gen. Butler would command the expedition. Yesterday several parties were sent out, and telegraphic signals agreed on, by which the approach of our troops can be made known.

General Butler has now confirmed the reports that an army which invades that state will be harassed by numerous bands of guerrillas.

An officer of the Illinois troops, just come from Cairo, says that Gen. Pillow was certainly seen on the Kentucky side of the river opposite Cairo on Saturday.

BALTIMORE, May 17, 1861.
All is quiet in this city this morning.

The Philadelphia camp is visited by thousands. It presents a splendid appearance.

Many of the men and officers are visiting people in the city.

INTERESTING FROM ANNAPOLIS.

ANNAPOLIS, May 17, 1861.
One hundred men, Captain Thomas's company (Thirtieth New York regiment), with two pieces of artillery and three days' rations, went down the bay yesterday on the propeller Van Woodward, to retake the Signal Point light ship, towed a few miles up the Great Wicomico. The secessionists have two more in their possession.

It was not determined in Washington to-day what Major General Butler would be sent.

A train ran off the track last night between Washington and Annapolis Junction, injuring one man and destroying seven cars.

Colonel Pratt has made excursions into the country of several miles from the junction.

William H. Anthon has left for Washington to assume the duties of Judge Advocate General for the State of New York.

Parties direct from Harper's Ferry say there are only about 8,000 troops there. There were many Unionists among them, who were induced to enlist by the false report of another John Brown raid on Harper's Ferry.

One object of scattering so many troops in so many counties of Virginia is, to make sure of a secession majority by their vote.

REPORTED PRIZES—ORDERS TO BUILD A NEW SLOOP-OF-WAR.

PHILADELPHIA, May 17, 1861.
The steamer City of Richmond has arrived from Washington for Fort Monroe. She left at Washington the steamer Boston, to sail yesterday for Annapolis. She reports last evening, thirty miles south of Cape Henlopen, saw steamer Yankee with three prize steamers in tow bound North.

Orders for building one of the seven sloop-of-war were received at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. The ship is to be pushed rapidly forward.

NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

BOSTON, May 17, 1861.
The United States frigate Albatross is now under sailing orders, and was hauled into the stream to-day.

Repairs on the steam frigate Mississippi are completed, and she is expected to sail to-day. Commodore Morris, flag officer of the Gulf squadron, will sail in her.

A proposition is before the Legislature for aid in erecting a monument over the remains of Whitney and Ladd, the two soldiers killed at Baltimore.

The Governor, accompanied by both branches of the Legislature, visited the forts to-day.

MOVEMENT OF CONNECTICUT TROOPS.

HARTFORD, May 17, 1861.
The three regiments of Connecticut Volunteers leave on Monday for Washington, fully armed and equipped.

IMPORTANT FROM CAIRO.

ANOTHER BY AIR-MAIL—ORDERS TO ENFORCE THE BLOCKADE OF THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RECEIVED, ETC.

The special despatch from Cairo, May 17, to the Chicago Post, says—

Another spy was arrested last night, supposed to be one of General Frost's. An informal trial was had, and he was held over till to-morrow. His property is known to be a United States Army officer arrived here to-day from Washington, bringing orders to enforce the blockade.

There have been many arrivals to-day of loyalists who have escaped from the South. They report increased excitement at Memphis, on account of the St. Louis affair. The rebels at Memphis declare the river shall not be blockaded here.

A Northern man was taken at Randolph, Tennessee, but he was not held, and was released. He was known to be a rebel, and was taken, and chained to work on the fortifications or be shot.

It is reported here that a Mr. Horton (who used to drive a team of black horses about the streets of Chicago) was taken by the rebels in the city of Cairo. Horton has recently come from Arkansas, where he had been specializing in horses.

The fortifications here are to be rapidly pushed forward.

IMPORTANT STRATEGIC POINT NEAR CAIRO.

For several days past we have published letters from our correspondents and other sources, intimating that the rebel forces now collecting on the Tennessee and Arkansas banks of the Mississippi are intended, ultimately, for a descent upon the fortified town of Cairo, Illinois. The most important strategic point from which a secession force could attack Cairo is that of Bird Point, Kentucky, within cannon shot range of the former place.

This point, next to Cairo itself, is the most important one in the entire State. It is a small, rocky point, situated on the west bank of the Mississippi, directly opposite to Cairo, for which it alone could command the commerce of the great Western valley, it is capable of being made a strong, healthy and a valuable neighbor.

It stands out boldly into the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, a little west of Cairo, and distant a little less than a mile. This is a highly important ground for Missouri, and if for Missouri, certainly for the United States. There is only one house on the point that is visible from the Illinois side. That house is Mr. Bird's. The whole point is a very small one, and is known to be a rich, fertile soil, and is a very valuable one.

It is not a large, built-up place, but it is a very important one. A reconnoitering party could, with a glass, overlook much that is going on in Cairo. The shore of the point is more abrupt than at any other place in the vicinity, and is higher at all points by three inches, and at some points by three feet, than the levee that defends Cairo.

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INTERESTING FROM FLORIDA.

Blockade of Key West—Seizure of the Yacht Wanderer—Movements of the Gulf Fleet.

OUR KEY WEST CORRESPONDENCE.
UNITED STATES STRAITS CRUISER,
Key West, May 9, 1861.

There is perhaps no quarter of the civilized world to which the attention of mankind is at present directed with more anxiety than the seceded States of the American Union; and a stray paragraph from this, the extreme point of those States, though still in the possession of the United States, may perhaps not be without interest.

The blockade of this port was proclaimed on Monday, the 12th inst. No vessels are now permitted to leave for any ports within the limits of the Confederate States, and this vessel is stationed here to enforce the blockade. Her armament consists of nine twenty-four pounders, and two twelve pounder howitzer brass guns; one thirty-two pounder iron gun, besides a large quantity of small arms, an abundance of ammunition, and the usual paraphernalia of a man of war. For the past month this usually monotonous place wears a brisk aspect, in consequence of the arrivals and departures of steam transports from the North. Forts Pickens, Jefferson and Taylor are now beyond the reach of the secessionists, until the government is disposed to evacuate them peacefully as of no value.

Yesterday, the United States steamer Wyandott and the schooner Plattsburgh, arrived from Pensacola, and report everything quiet there, and that the rebels were being rapidly concentrated on the island of Santa Rosa, opposite the Navy Yard. The water witch, after taking in a supply of coal and water, will sail to-morrow for Pensacola. A schooner boat will also follow in a few days. Wyandott for Havana this evening. The celebrated yacht Wanderer was seized by the blockade on the evening of the 12th inst., and is now lying at the government wharf, in charge of Lieut. James M. Johnston, with a prize crew on board. The Wanderer had been lying in the harbor of Havana upwards of a year, and had left that place the day previous to her seizure.

Key West, May 9, 1861.
The brig Pellico, Baxter, arrived from Pensacola the 6th inst., and is discharging part of a cargo of lumber at this port.

The bark A. B. Harriman, Blanchard, arrived on the 5th from Havre, touching here for orders.

The schooner D. N. Richard, Ives, arrived from Pensacola the 5th, looking. She will report.

The United States sloop-of-war St. Louis, Capt. Gibson, sailed for Garden Key, Tortugas, on the 6th inst.

The schooner Narver, Captain Hall, arrived from New York on the 6th inst., with freight for this city and Port Taylor. Passed the schooner J. N. Gault on the 6th.

The schooner Platts, Dennison, arrived on the 7th from Vera Cruz. She had been chartered by Quartermaster Gillet to take a cargo of lumber to Port Jefferson.